

Analysis and Development Path of English Teachers in Middle School English Teachers' Classroom Evaluation Literacy



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Abstract

Since the 1980s, great changes have taken place in the field of educational evaluation. We have been transferring our focus from “examination culture” to “evaluation culture”, from focusing on the results to focusing on the process, from focusing on the knowledge of students to the comprehensive quality of students. These changes undoubtedly put forward higher requirements for teachers' evaluation literacy, and it means that only teachers with a high level of evaluation literacy can be qualified for this change. However, there is still a lot of room for improvement in the evaluation literacy of English teachers in China. Therefore, this paper mainly combs the basic theory of English teacher evaluation literacy for Domestic middle school English teachers. It will discuss the status quo of teacher evaluation literacy in China and puts forward corresponding improvement methods.

Keywords

Teacher Evaluation Literacy, Middle School English Teacher, Classroom Assessment

1. Introduction

For a long time, although much attention has been paid to foreign language teachers' foreign language proficiency and teaching level, relatively little attention has been paid to evaluation literacy in China. In recent years, on the one hand, scholars have found that teachers generally lack evaluation literacy or have low evaluation literacy, so that these teachers cannot implement classroom assessment appropriately; on the other hand, the discussion on evaluation literacy is scattered and has not yet formed a certain system, mainly focusing on theoretical overviews, including the definition of concepts and the construction of theoretical frameworks. However, not many studies have been conducted on how to improve the evaluation literacy of foreign language teachers. Therefore, it is an important and far-reaching topic to understand the connotation of teachers' evaluation literacy and to pay attention to the improvement of foreign language

teachers' evaluation literacy.

2. Theoretical framework of language evaluation literacy

2.1. Concept

The American scholar Stiggins introduced the concept of "evaluation literacy" in 1991. According to him, evaluation literacy is a quality that teachers develop or cultivate in their daily teaching and evaluation behavioral activities [1]. For teachers, a significant portion of their teaching time is spent on evaluation-related activities. Therefore, in his view, those possess some common characteristics: knowing the difference between reliable and unreliable evaluations and entering the field of evaluation knowing what they are evaluating, why they are evaluating, and how to evaluate better; knowing how to present good student performance; knowing how evaluations can go wrong and how to prevent them; knowing the potential and negative consequences of poor, inaccurate assessment. According to Popham, an American educational assessment expert, "Assessment literacy refers to an individual teacher's understanding of the most basic assessment concepts and processes that can influence educational decisions. Educators who are assessment literate not only master esoteric measurement terms and procedures, but are also able to understand the content of assessments that influence the everyday decisions of student assessment" [2]. In summary, teacher assessment literacy refers to the professional functions that teachers are expected to have in order to engage in academic assessment. As the primary practitioner of assessment, teachers should know how the decisions they make affect students, know how to use appropriate assessment methods to collect assessment information, and be able to communicate assessment results effectively, while being able to engage students in assessment, documentation, and communication to maximize student motivation and effectiveness.

2.2. Literature review

2.2.1. Foreign research literature

Boyles, P. defined language assessment literacy as the understanding of testing and assessment principles and practices that language teachers are expected to develop and stated that teachers with language assessment literacy should be able to select different tests for different testing purposes and should also be able to use certain tools to analyze and interpret test results and to apply such test results to their teaching in order to Fulcher, G. expanded the definition of assessment literacy of foreign language teachers based on a questionnaire survey of teachers and constructed a three-dimensional model of the definition of language assessment literacy consisting of practices (bottom level), principles (middle level) and environment (top level) [4].

Davies, A. proposed, based on research and practice, that the language assessment literacy system contains three aspects: principles, knowledge, and skills [5]. Among them, principles refer to the theoretical foundations and ethical guidelines related to testing, such as issues of proper test use, fairness and impartiality of testing, and professionalism of testing; knowledge refers to a body of knowledge that covers the entire language measurement aspect, such as psychometric knowledge and foreign language knowledge; and skills emphasize practical skills, which include test design, question writing, scoring, test paper analysis, score interpretation, and Taylor, L. finely differentiated the assessment literacy required by different stakeholders and argued that the assessment literacy required by language teachers varies in terms of the dimensions and the degree to which it needs to be achieved [6].

2.2.2. National research literature

The research on English teachers' evaluation literacy by Chinese scholars started relatively late and the literature is relatively small, and the specific scholars' views are as follows.

Lin Dunlai (2016) classified assessment literacy into the following four dimensions, which are understanding assessment methods (familiar with various assessment methods and their advantages and disadvantages), mastering scoring skills (using scoring criteria to judge students' exams or assignments), paying attention to assessment validity (using assessment correctly to motivate students' learning; reflecting on assessment effects; and assessment ethics), and interpreting and using assessment results (interpreting scores; using assessment results to improve teaching) [7].

Lin, Dunlai (2019) proposed a trinity of "principles, knowledge, and skills" as a theoretical framework for teachers' evaluation literacy in language assessment, where "principles" refers to the promotion of learning based on local socio-cultural values, proper use of assessment, and concern for equity issues The "knowledge" refers to basic concepts of measurement, knowledge of language systems, and knowledge of applied linguistics, and the "skills" refer to the development of evaluation methods, administration, scoring, test analysis, reporting, and feedback [8].

Wang Qiang (2020) constructed a three-dimensional framework of English teachers' evaluation literacy, which are evaluation concepts (having a correct concept of evaluation), evaluation knowledge (clarifying goals, determining ob-

jectives, grasping content, collecting and interpreting evidence, providing feedback, making adjustments, and communicating and reporting), and evaluation ethics (focusing on fairness and transparency of evaluation) [9].

The revised model of Pan Mingwei's (2020) language assessment literacy constructs are assessment knowledge (mastery of English linguistics and applied linguistics), assessment competence (basic language skills and language research skills), assessment principles (educational measurement principles: developing tests, composing test papers, test protocols, scoring criteria, feedback scores, etc.), and assessment acceptance (emotions and attitudes) [10].

3. The current situation and problems of English teachers' language evaluation literacy in China

3.1. A survey on the current situation of teachers' language evaluation literacy in China

Relevant scholars in recent years, comprehensive questionnaire and interview results show that teachers mainly have the following problems in implementing classroom assessment [12].

(1) Classroom evaluation criteria are a reflection of teachers' proficiency in classroom evaluation knowledge and skills, and they need to be developed considering various factors such as course type, teaching content, and students' level, which is very difficult for teachers who have not undergone special study and training. The empirical study found that teachers mentioned in the interviews that the criteria for classroom evaluation were difficult to determine, especially for different types of courses.

(2) In terms of feedback on assessment results, teachers' inappropriate feedback methods may discourage students' learning to a certain extent, and failure to provide timely feedback may affect the effectiveness of assessment. Therefore, the timing and manner of teachers' feedback are very important. If the mistakes are pointed out in person at that time, it may undermine students' confidence and create a fear of this subject, which is not conducive to future learning. In addition, because of the large class size in domestic English classrooms, teachers usually cannot point out each student's problems in turn after asking a question, and teachers often say the correct answer themselves after students have answered, passing over students' mistakes and making it difficult to correct them one by one in time.

(3) Teachers' classroom assessment methods are relatively simple, mainly using classroom tests to evaluate students. In the interviews, most teachers believed that "classroom tests" were feasible for teachers, but classroom presentations took longer and could not be used in large classes. Classroom observations revealed that most teachers did adopt monotonous classroom assessment methods, mainly classroom questions and classroom tests, and only a few teachers occasionally used self-assessment and mutual assessment [13].

(4) The sources of classroom evaluation knowledge were lacking, and most teachers relied only on courses taken during their undergraduate or graduate studies, without conducting in-depth research and study after work. Interviews with teachers revealed that teachers' knowledge about classroom evaluation was mainly derived from courses taken during their undergraduate and graduate studies. Some of them also confessed in the survey that they were not sure whether they had taken such courses during their undergraduate and graduate studies.

(5) In classroom teaching and evaluation, some teachers were unable to clarify the subjectivity of students or encountered difficulties in promoting students' subjectivity. Two teachers in the interviews talked about the importance of making students the main subjects of the classroom and giving full play to the teacher's leading role, but it is difficult to implement this, and teachers unconsciously ignore the students' subjective status.

(6) The teachers were not clear about the meaning of formative assessment, so they could not use it flexibly in teaching. "Evaluation is testing" was a high-frequency term mentioned by several teachers in the interviews, indicating that classroom teachers have a vague concept of classroom evaluation, equate evaluation with testing, and lack the knowledge and literacy of classroom evaluation literacy.

4. Strategies to improve English teachers' evaluation literacy in China

Based on previous research and review of related materials, this paper attempts to explore how to improve foreign language teachers' evaluation literacy in terms of concrete implementation in three aspects: practice, theory and environment.

(1) Improving foreign language teachers' knowledge, skills and abilities at the practical level

Foreign language teachers should actively participate in pre-service and in-service training organized by schools or education departments. Workshops are one of the most effective ways to conduct foreign language evaluation literacy training. Jin, Y., and W. Jie investigated the effectiveness of a one-week language training program using a self-designed language assessment literacy test. The effectiveness of the training course was investigated by using a self-designed test of evaluative literacy, and the results showed that participants' evaluative literacy improved on all

dimensions related to the course [14]. In addition, in order to improve the quality of comprehensive and effective assessment, foreign language teachers should also participate in more course training on statistical and analytical methods of data in educational statistics and psychometrics, because scientific measurements and statistics can provide useful references for accurately determining students' levels and developing appropriate teaching strategies. In addition, training and guidance on value orientations are crucial. Because value orientations determine and govern teachers' value choices, they have a significant impact on teachers themselves, learners, and teaching. For example, foreign language teachers should abandon the view that assessment is only for teachers. On the contrary, teachers should involve students in assessment practices and let them give their opinions and suggestions about the teaching materials, teachers' teaching strategies and their own learning methods, so as to continuously strengthen teacher-student cooperation, establish a teacher-student assessment community and create a good learning atmosphere [15].

(2) Improving theoretical literacy of foreign language teachers' assessment at the theoretical level

Developing assessment literacy should be reflected not only at the practical level, but also at the theoretical level. Effective testing is the link between teaching and learning. In order to improve evaluation literacy and realize effective testing, foreign language teachers should read a wide range of different types of literature resources such as monographs, textbooks, and journal articles on assessment to help broaden the basic theoretical knowledge needed to carry out testing work and use test results in language teaching, and enhance their theoretical literacy.

Foreign language teachers should also enhance their theoretical knowledge in educational statistics and psychometrics in order to maximize the validity and reliability of the tests and promote test fairness [16]. In addition, foreign language teachers' ethics and codes of conduct are an important part of their assessment literacy. Therefore, foreign language teachers should also be familiar with ethical norms in assessment activities at the theoretical level so that they can apply them in practice and ensure that the assessment activities are conducted fairly and smoothly. Testing is not a narrow knowledge of language testing; foreign language teachers should enhance their theoretical knowledge at the level of culture and values, pay attention to the sociological aspects of language testing, and ensure that assessments are objective, fair, and accurate.

(3) Improving foreign language teachers' evaluation literacy at the environmental level

Schools and society should invest more in the professional training of foreign language teachers and provide them with the nutrition they need to improve their evaluation literacy. Relevant policies should be formulated to provide teachers with different levels and scales of training, such as pre-service and vocational re-education, according to the actual situation of education, so as to ensure that foreign language teachers can learn systematic theoretical knowledge related to evaluation and establish a more scientific evaluation concept; evaluation mechanisms should be constantly improved to help and urge teachers to increase and update their evaluation knowledge and improve their evaluation ability; the state or schools should invest funds to Establish a continuous evaluation literacy training system. Evaluation literacy is a gradual continuum, its development and cultivation is hierarchical and graded, and its study is permanent; the assessment of assessment literacy is included in the scope of obtaining teacher qualifications and in the assessment of teachers in order to encourage and motivate foreign language teachers to do well in assessment practice, which also has important and far-reaching significance in improving the evaluation literacy of foreign language teachers.

5. Conclusion

The improvement of teachers' evaluation literacy depends not only on the internal factors of teachers themselves, but also on external factors such as schools and society. Teachers can only further promote their own professional growth and development and improve their evaluation literacy by correcting their attitudes, raising their evaluation awareness, continuously improving theoretical evaluation literacy at the theoretical level, and accumulating evaluation knowledge, skills and abilities at the practical level to achieve a combination of internal and external factors.

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